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14. ABSTRACT The Department of Defense (DOD) strongly advocates unity of effort and coordinated action in their myriad joint publications and doctrine; however, DOD has yet to achieve these overarching objectives when working across interagency lines in the domestic realm. DOD Combatant Commanders have chosen instead to create a separate parallel command structure that results in inefficient response operations and duplication of effort, and may yield fatal consequences during the next catastrophic domestic event. This paper will examine the evolution of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the National Response Plan (NRP) and DOD's role in domestic response operations; review select lessons learned from major disaster response operations, National Special Security Events (NSSE), and national exercises; and provide recommendations to fully integrate DOD capabilities into domestic response operations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the nation's management of homeland security operations and catastrophic events.					
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Practicing What You Preach:
Achieving Unity of Effort and Unified Action
During Domestic Response Operations

by

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A paper submitted to the Provost, Naval War College, for consideration in the Prize Essay Competition in the Admiral Richard G. Colbert Memorial Prize category.

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Abstract

PRACTICING WHAT YOU PREACH: ACHIEVING UNITY OF EFFORT AND UNIFIED ACTION DURING DOMESTIC RESPONSE OPERATIONS

The Department of Defense (DOD) strongly advocates unity of effort and coordinated action in their myriad joint publications and doctrine; however, DOD has yet to achieve these overarching objectives when working across interagency lines in the domestic realm. DOD Combatant Commanders have chosen instead to create a separate parallel command structure that results in inefficient response operations and duplication of effort, and may yield fatal consequences during the next catastrophic domestic event.

This paper will examine the evolution of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the National Response Plan (NRP) and DOD's role in domestic response operations; review select lessons learned from major disaster response operations, National Special Security Events (NSSE), and national exercises; and provide recommendations to fully integrate DOD capabilities into domestic response operations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the nation's management of homeland security operations and catastrophic events.

Final recommendations include the full integration of a DOD command element into the Joint Field Office (JFO) at the operational level, the integration of DOD staff members into national interagency Incident Management Teams with a common national training and qualification system, the development of a unified information management system that aligns multi-agency reporting requirements and creates a single common operational picture, and the incorporation of NIMS organizational structures, the Incident Command System planning process and DOD JFO integration guidance into joint doctrine.

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We're engaged in a long struggle against violent extremists that seek to exploit any seams in our armor. Our job – the (U.S. Northern Command) team's job – is to mend those seams, to strengthen the shield.

General Gene Renuart, Commander, U.S. Northern Command; March 23, 2007

As General Renuart assumed command of the U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM) in March 2007, he recognized significant seams or gaps remain in the U.S. Government's (USG) ability to defend against and respond to terrorist attacks and catastrophic incidents. In recent memory, the results of both the 2005 hurricane season and Top Officials Three (TOPOFF 3), the nation's largest domestic terrorism response exercise that same year, were sobering reminders that the USG has much to learn about coordinating effective and efficient domestic response operations.¹ Though the National Response Plan (NRP) was revised in May 2006 in an attempt to address the lessons learned from recent failures, the revisions did not satisfactorily address the integration of military and civilian responders at the operational level – a seam that may cost lives during the next catastrophic incident.

The Department of Defense (DOD) strongly advocates unity of effort and coordinated action in their myriad joint publications and doctrine; however, DOD has yet to achieve these overarching objectives when working across interagency lines in the domestic realm. While integration has improved somewhat at the tactical level, DOD Combatant Commanders have been reluctant to fully integrate with USG agencies during catastrophic events at the operational level. Discounting both Presidential and Deputy Secretary of Defense directives, DOD leaders have chosen to conduct business as usual, creating a separate parallel command structure that results in inefficient response operations and duplication of effort.² This division between DOD and the multi-agency USG command and control structure at the operational level is an unnecessary and dangerous seam that should be mended by Combatant

Commanders who are called upon to conduct Civil Support (CS) and Homeland Security (HS) missions.³

This paper will examine the evolution of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the NRP and DOD's role in domestic response operations; review select lessons learned from major disaster response operations, National Special Security Events (NSSE), and national exercises; and provide recommendations to fully integrate DOD forces into domestic response operations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the nation's management of homeland security operations and catastrophic events.

Evolution of the National Incident Management System

In December 2004, the NRP replaced multiple disparate federal response plans with one integrated national plan that required all agencies to use a single National Incident Management System.⁴ Additionally, *National Incident Management System*, published in March 2004, required all Federal, State, local and tribal governments to use the Incident Command System (ICS) to respond to all domestic incidents regardless of "cause, size, or complexity."⁵ The final impetus for nationwide adoption of NIMS and ICS was the disjointed response to the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. *The 9/11 Commission Report* recommended that all emergency responders adopt ICS and always establish a unified command.⁶ In response to this recommendation, President Bush issued two Homeland Security Presidential Directives (HSPD-5 and HSPD-8) that required the establishment of a single, comprehensive national incident management system.⁷ These directives led to the creation and adoption of both NIMS and the NRP.

ICS, a common thread throughout post-9/11 Presidential Directives and 9/11 Commission recommendations, was developed more than 35 years ago and has its origins in

the aftermath of a devastating wildfire in California. In 1970, as a result of the ineffective interagency coordination and communications attributed with the loss of sixteen lives, Congress mandated the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) design a system to effectively coordinate multi-agency actions.⁸ In 1982, the USFS system was adopted as the National Interagency Incident Management System.⁹ ICS evolved within the fire community throughout the 1970s and 1980s and, in the early 1990s, the system began to take hold throughout the broader emergency response community, ultimately expanding into an “all-hazard” response methodology. Throughout the late-1990s, the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Emergency Management Institute published ICS courses, and several Federal agencies with close ties to the first-responder community adopted ICS.¹⁰ In 2005, following the large DOD response to Hurricane Katrina, the Deputy Secretary of Defense directed all DOD organizations to “adopt and implement procedures consistent with the NIMS and the ICS” at all DOD domestic installations.¹¹

The advantages of a Unified Command using ICS include a single incident organization with a common set of response objectives that promote unity of effort. ICS requires a modular and scalable organization; strict adherence to span-of-control limits; common terminology, organizational elements and position titles; and a systematic planning process that leads to a single, multi-agency Incident Action Plan.¹² Information management flow and coordination are greatly improved when all response organizations are represented in a single, unified command.¹³

At the operational level, the Joint Field Office (JFO), a multi-agency coordination center, is organized around the NIMS organizational structure into management, operations, planning, logistics and finance/administration sections (See Figure 1). A sixth section to

manage intelligence and information may be added to support mission objectives. This structure aligns with the ICS organizational structure at the tactical level, the Incident Command Post. Table I places the Joint Field Office and Incident Command Post into perspective in relation to the DOD levels of military operations.

	<i>National Response System</i>	<i>Department of Defense</i>
Strategic	Homeland Security Council (HSC) Interagency Advisory Council (IAC) Domestic Readiness Group (DRG)	National Security Council (NSC) Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS)
Operational	Joint Field Office (JFO)	Regional Combatant Command (COCOM) Joint Task Force (JTF)
Tactical	Incident Command Post (ICP)	Military Units (e.g., Carrier Strike Group or Expeditionary Strike Group)

Table I: National Response System and Department of Defense Comparison

Based on this comparison, the Joint Task Force (JTF), as the supporting operational-level command for Homeland Security (HS) and Civil Support (CS) missions, should integrate into the JFO during incidents of national significance. However, as noted in National War College instructional guidance, “strictly speaking, the JTF does not ‘plug in’ to a civilian command structure at all.”¹⁴ In reality, the Defense Coordinating Officer (DCO), typically an O-6 level military officer, serves as the single DOD point of coordination within the JFO.¹⁵ Though advances have been made recently to permanently station DCOs to work alongside their interagency counterparts in each FEMA Region, the DCO does not command forces. He merely serves in an administrative function to facilitate DOD support for domestic responders.¹⁶ Without true representation of DOD command functions in the JFO, the seam remains.

Catastrophe is the Catalyst for Change

In 1986, the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act reworked the command structure of the United States military. The goal of the Goldwater-Nichols Act was to fix problems caused by inter-service parochialism, insularity and rivalries that had led

to the catastrophic failure of the Iranian hostage rescue in 1980 and the inefficient Grenada invasion in 1983.¹⁷ In effect, the goal was to fully establish unity of effort by requiring integrated command structures and joint military planning, logistics and operations. As a result, the term “jointness” was born.

In the 1990s, a comparable divide among domestic emergency response agencies culminated in a similar national call to unify during response operations. Prior to publication of the NRP in 2004, U.S. domestic law enforcement and emergency response personnel operated under diverse plans. The two primary plans, the Federal Response Plan (FRP) and the U.S. Government Domestic Terrorism Concept of Operations Plan (CONOP), divided response operations into two realms: “crisis management,” the initial terrorism response operations led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and “consequence management,” the disaster clean-up operations led by FEMA. As a result of this separation, FBI and FEMA routinely set up separate command centers in response to the same incident: an FBI Joint Operations Center (JOC) for law enforcement operations and a FEMA Regional Operations Center (ROC) for consequence management operations. As with the military command structure prior to 1986, numerous problems with communications and coordination hampered interagency response effectiveness.

Based on the findings of the 9/11 Commission, again in an effort to fully establish unity of effort, the FRP and CONOP were integrated into a single plan, the NRP, which required the establishment of a single unified incident command for both law enforcement and emergency responders. At the operational level, the 2004 NRP replaced FEMA’s ROC with the JFO construct and required the FBI JOC to become a component of the JFO Operations Section, integrating all criminal investigation and law enforcement activities into

the overall incident management.¹⁸ This integration removed the historical dividing line between “crisis” and “consequence” management to unite civilian responders into a single command with common objectives. It was designed to facilitate a smooth transition between the different phases of a domestic response operation.

An examination of the command and control structure of the Republican National Convention (RNC) security operation in late-August 2004, prior to the publication of the NRP in December 2004, shows why command and control changes were necessary. During the RNC, one of the largest security operations in U.S. history, the “unified command” consisted of more than ten disparate major information collection and command and control centers dispersed throughout New York City.¹⁹ Of note, the DOD JTF operated relatively independently of the other federal agencies.²⁰ In addition to being geographically separated, hindering efficiency of operations and unity of effort, the multiple command posts were not linked by a single information management system. The Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) Information Network had been tested earlier in 2004 at the Democratic National Convention; however, many local, State and Federal agencies, including DOD, had yet to gain access to or were not capable of using the system.²¹ As a result, the command and control and information management diagram looked like a spider web. Had a terrorist incident occurred, the disparate command centers would have been hard-pressed to coordinate an effective response.

In April 2005, the U.S. government held the most comprehensive domestic multi-agency terrorism response exercise in history: TOPOFF 3. This Congressionally mandated exercise was the first major test of the new National Response Plan and the integration of the FBI JOC into the JFO. Though the FBI was now integrated with local, State and Federal

responders, DOD remained linked only through a DCO and opted to conduct a separate exercise, ARDENT SENTRY. Additionally, the information-sharing process had not improved since the Republican National Convention: local, State and Federal government agencies continued to use separate information management systems. The disjointed system delayed critical information flow during the fast-paced weapons of mass destruction (WMD) response scenario, and participants failed to achieve the desired goal of creating a realistic common operating picture for senior officials.

The true test of the USG's ability to meet the requirements of the new NRP occurred in late-August 2005 with the landfall of Hurricane Katrina. Because the NRP calls for the same command and control construct during all incidents of national significance, many of the lessons learned from this event can be applied to future catastrophic response operations. As with the RNC and TOPOFF 3, *The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned* found that disparate information management systems and command and control constructs resulted in "an often inconsistent and inaccurate operating picture of the disaster area for the senior decision-makers, duplication of efforts, gaps in addressing requests for assistance, and the inefficient allocation of resources."²² In regards to DOD integration, the report found that "a fragmented deployment system and lack of an integrated command structure for both active duty and National Guard forces exacerbated communications and coordination issues during the initial response." NORTHCOM established Joint Task Force Katrina to coordinate military operations; however, the JTF did not integrate with the interagency JFO. Additionally, a lack of coordination between the JTF Katrina Commander and the JFO during the early stages of the response delayed critical response efforts.²³

In 2006, as a result of the lessons learned during the Hurricane Katrina response, the National Response Plan was revised in an attempt to address DOD integration, information management, and other response issues. However, the revision did not fully integrate DOD into the operational level of domestic response. The 2006 National Response Plan revision states: “This change provides that if a JTF is established, consistent with operational requirements, its command and control element will be co-located with the Principal Federal Official at the JFO to ensure coordination and unity of effort.”²⁴ This, however, has been interpreted by NORTHCOM as simply a requirement to better support the DCO, not to integrate operational-level staff into the JFO to ensure a unified USG effort to connect the strategic and tactical levels of response.²⁵ Additionally, the revision states that if disparate command centers cannot be co-located, they should be “connected virtually.” The revisions, however, do not establish how the command posts should be virtually linked, in effect, leaving the information management issue unresolved.

In late-2006, the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act expanded the term “joint matters” to include the interagency community. The legislation specified that, in addition to all DOD services, “joint” operations should now include other departments and agencies of the United States and non-governmental organizations involved in “strategic planning and contingency planning” and “command and control operations under a unified command.”²⁶ As DOD leaders failed to fully achieve both Presidential and Deputy Secretary of Defense calls for USG unification, Congress provided yet another impetus for military cultural change by tying funding to a vision of unity of action. Like the Goldwater-Nichols Act twenty years earlier, the 2007 National Defense Authorization Act creates an opportunity to address past failures to achieve true USG unity of effort.

Recommendations and Analysis

The following recommendations and analysis provide a methodology for DOD leaders to fully integrate into domestic response operations and align with the intent of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act.

JTF and JFO Integration: A Joint Task Force (JTF) command element should be fully integrated into the JFO at the operational level of domestic response. *The Strategy for Homeland Defense and Civil Support* states that DOD “will achieve unity of effort with our interagency partners...DOD’s responses will be planned, practiced, and carefully integrated into the national response.”²⁷ With the establishment of NORTHCOM, it is evident that DOD personnel and assets will play vital roles in future domestic response operations. However, though the National Security Strategy (NSS), National Military Strategy (NMS), and multiple other homeland defense, civil support, and military response plans call for coordination with local, State, and Federal responders, the operational-level command and control construct of DOD, the JTF, remains separate from the civilian command and control organization.²⁸ Though linked by a DCO and perhaps liaison officers, the command structure is not unified and, as a result, there are significant seams in USG unity of effort during domestic response operations.²⁹

In addition to a lack of integration at the operational level, DOD and domestic responders do not speak the same language. While domestic responders are required to use the Incident Command System planning process, DOD has not adopted the nationally mandated system and chooses to continue to use the Joint Operational Planning Execution System (JOPES).³⁰ For example, the JFO produces Incident Action Plans and Coordination Plans using the NIMS ICS planning process, while DOD produces planning products, such as

operations orders, using JOPES. Though it has been argued DOD’s “canonical” planning model may not prove effective during rapidly-paced terrorist response scenarios in a multi-agency environment, it is a system that it is fully entrenched in DOD, has proven effective in multiple operations and will likely not be altered.³¹ In reality, the NIMS and JOPES planning processes are not that different; both have common elements and functions. The solution is to align these operational crisis action planning processes as shown in Table II:

<i>Joint Field Office (JFO) Coordination and Support Planning Process</i>	<i>Joint Operational Planning and Execution System (JOPES) Crisis Action Planning Process</i>
JFO CG Objectives Meeting	Commander’s Intent
Prepare for Strategy Meeting	Course of Action Development Staff Estimates
Strategy Meeting	Course of Action / Commander’s Estimate
Prepare for Planning Meeting	Concept of Operations
Planning Meeting	Execution Planning (Alert or Planning Order)
Coordination Plan Preparation and Approval	Operations Order and Execute Order
Execute Plan and Assess Progress	Execution

Table II: Comparison of JFO and JOPES Planning Processes

By aligning these processes through an integrated command structure, crisis action planning and “joint” operations can be synchronized to enhance unity of effort. Additionally, alignment will create an economy of effort in the planning processes and produce a more accurate common operational picture. While DOD operations will benefit from improvements to crisis action planning and achievement of the desired common operating picture, civilian planners will also benefit from experiencing the regimented military decision-making process and working with experienced operational planners. This symbiotic relationship will enhance national domestic response and homeland security operations and contingency plans.

Since DOD and all other Federal agencies have agreed to use ICS as their common domestic response language and State and local grants are tied to proof of compliance with ICS implementation requirements, DOD should align its domestic contingency plans and

training and exercise programs with the NIMS requirements. This means training select DOD domestic response personnel to the same or higher standards as their domestic counterparts, conducting interagency-exercises with a unified command, aligning JOPES and NIMS planning processes, and creating a common operational picture during every exercise and response. In essence, as advocated by DOD for multi-national operations, JTF personnel involved in domestic response operations must become culturally sensitive and “bilingual,” capable of speaking both DOD and NIMS command and control languages.

There are several cultural barriers that inhibit DOD from integrating with domestic responders. Many of the same organizational barriers that prevented inter-service integration prior to the Goldwater-Nichols Act still plague the military today. Insularity and parochialism prevent the integration of command structures and the alignment of planning processes and information management systems with the interagency community. Military rank consciousness can be a particularly significant barrier when attempting to align military and civilian command structures. While DOD organizational charts are based predominantly on military rank, NIMS organizational charts are based on a system of position-specific qualifications. Civilian incident commanders may be “junior” to JTF Commanders. The solution to this problem is two-fold. First, as discussed earlier, select DOD officers engaged in CS and HS missions should be trained commensurate with their civilian counterparts. Ideally, these officers will attend the same courses and exercises, and earn the same national qualifications as interagency emergency responders. Second, and more difficult to achieve, is the need for a change within the DOD culture. DOD members working in domestic response operations must recognize and value the contributions of the interagency community. Like the cultural shift that occurred in the twenty years following the

Congressional mandate for unified military commands, a similar cultural change should occur once DOD and interagency domestic responders are unified during training, planning, preparedness and responses to national catastrophic events.

Many have argued that DOD cannot integrate into domestic response operations due to constitutional and legal restrictions. This is not the case. In fact, this issue has already been addressed in a DOD Directive, *Military Assistance to Civil Authorities*, which allows DOD personnel and assets to respond immediately during emergencies, such as a large-scale domestic terrorist event or WMD scenario.³² Additionally, the NRP *Catastrophic Incident Annex* requires the immediate response of Federal agencies during catastrophic events without waiting for official State and local requests.³³ According to the NIMS, no agency's legal authorities or jurisdiction will be compromised or neglected during a response operation and the NRP states that the military chain of command will not be altered.³⁴ Additionally, to expedite National Guard call-ups during a national emergency, the John Warner Defense Authorization Act of 2007 amended the Insurrection Act to allow the President to quickly federalize National Guard troops to "restore public order as a result of a national disaster, epidemic, or serious public health emergency."³⁵

Finally, the President reiterated the need for full integration of command during response operations in the National Security Strategy (NSS). For example, the goals of the NSS include "improving the capacity of agencies to plan, prepare, coordinate, integrate, and execute responses." Additionally, the NSS calls for "improved coordination within the Federal government, with state and local partners, and with the private sector."³⁶ Recognizing that the NIMS vision of "unified command" does not fully align with DOD's concept of "unity of command" with a single military commander, DOD must become

accustomed to cooperation and coordination as opposed to rigid lines of command. General Gary Luck, former Senior Mentor at the Joint Warfighting Center, discovered a “best practice” for military commanders involved in interagency operations: “Focus on unity of effort, not unity of command. Recognize the reality of different perspectives and goals of your partners. Strive to arrive at a set of common desired effects to promote unity of effort.”³⁷ Though the lesson was derived from operations in a theater of war, it is just as applicable and entirely aligned with interagency operations in the domestic arena. Today, the majority of operations, whether domestic or expeditionary, are truly interagency operations. Lessons and skills learned during domestic operations will improve the military’s ability to conduct interagency operations overseas.

In sum, DOD must overcome the cultural and doctrinal barriers that prevent full integration with domestic responders at the operational level during catastrophic terrorist events. It is a goal of the NSS and required by HSPD-5, NIMS and the 2007 Defense Authorization Act. Failure to move forward with JTF/JFO command staff integration, a comprehensive training program that includes ICS and position-specific NIMS training as part of the professional military education requirements, and a fully-integrated exercise program will hinder DOD integration into domestic response operations.³⁸

National Interagency Incident Management Teams: A DOD command staff should integrate into national interagency Incident Management Teams with a common national training and qualification system. A lesson from the federal response to Hurricane Katrina is that “we must transform our approach for catastrophic incidents from one of bureaucratic coordination to proactive unified command that creates true unity of effort.”³⁹ To effectively manage command and control while fighting wildfires, the USFS established

National Interagency Incident Management Teams (IMT).⁴⁰ These teams are comprised of members from a variety of Federal, State, county and local agencies who have received advanced ICS and disaster management training. Of importance, there is a common qualification process and each member is trained and qualified to serve in a specific position.

Using the USFS as a model, over the last ten years the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) institutionalized an ICS training program that includes a series of nationally accepted position-specific courses and qualifications. The USCG has also established IMTs on each coast to support multi-agency operations throughout the United States. These teams have effectively integrated into and supported Unified Commands and JFOs during National Special Security Events, major oil and hazardous material response operations and, most recently, the response to Hurricane Katrina in which the service was credited with saving over 33,000 lives.

Based on years of experience, both the USFS and USCG recognized the generic, web-based “all-hands” baseline ICS training, currently used by both NORTHCOM and U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM), was insufficient to train IMT leaders or the ICS Command and General Staff. To take select candidates to the next level, the agencies developed a series of position-specific courses and intensive IMT exercises, and required deployments as a team to build cohesion and interoperability. With modest investment, DOD could build on these lessons and develop or join an IMT to facilitate integration into domestic Joint Field Offices. NORTHCOM and PACOM could designate their Standing Joint Force Headquarters (SJFHQ) personnel as an IMT based on the USFS and USCG models. The SJFHQ organization, comprised of 58 operational planners, command and control specialists and systems analysts, is relatively simple and readily aligns with the JFO construct.⁴¹ The

SJFHQ is composed of six groups: command, information superiority, plans, operations, knowledge management, and logistics (See Figure 2).⁴² These SJFHQs could train with USFS and USCG IMTs to benchmark best practices and improve national domestic response capabilities. This IMT could then integrate into the JFO immediately upon notification of a catastrophic incident to facilitate civil-military operations within a single, unified command and achieve the goals of the NRP, NIMS and NSS. Table III shows how SJFHQ or JTF personnel could integrate into the JFO and recommends appropriate levels of ICS position-specific training.

<i>NIMS Incident Command System (ICS)</i>	<i>Department of Defense Standing Joint Force Headquarters (SJFHQ)</i>	<i>Recommended Level of ICS Training and Certification⁴³</i>
JFO Coordination Group (JFOCG) Principal Federal Official (PFO)	Commander, SJFHQ Chief of Staff, SJFQ Defense Coordinating Officer (DCO)	Incident Commander Certification (Type 1)
Operations Section Chief (OSC)	J-3 (Operations Director)	OSC Certification (Type 1)
Planning Section Chief (PSC)	J-5 / J-7 (Plans Director and Operational Plans)	PSC Certification (Type 1)
Logistics Section Chief (LSC)	J-4 (Logistics), Force Protection Planner and DCO	LSC Certification (Type 1)
Administrative / Finance Section Chief (FSC)	J-1, J-8 (Force Structure, Resources and Assessment) and DCO	FSC Certification (Type 1)
Public Information Officer (PIO)	Information Operations Officer Information Superiority Officer	PIO Certification (Type 1)
Situation Unit Leader (SITL)	Joint Operations Center Personnel and Situation Awareness Analysts	SITL Certification (Type 1)
Resource Unit Leader (RESL)	Deployment and Sustainment Officers	RESL Certification (Type 1)
Communications Unit Leader (COML)	Joint Network Control Officers and Computer Support Technicians	ICS-300 and applicable technical training and experience
Air Operations Branch Director	Air and Aerospace Operations Officer	ICS-300 and applicable technical training and experience

Table III: Proposed JFO Integration and ICS Certifications of SJFHQ Personnel

Ultimately, the USG should establish and maintain standing multi-agency IMTs that provide command and control and technical expertise from a variety of Federal and State agencies at the operational level. These agencies could tap the best crisis management talent

from the myriad organizations already required to respond, including DHS, DOD, Department of Energy, Department of Agriculture, Department of Interior, Department of Health and Human Services, the Center for Disease Control, and many others. Of note, this year FEMA is tasked with creating rapidly deployable, interagency IMTs to execute the functions of the JFO.⁴⁴ This is an opportunity for DOD leaders to join and help build an IMT from the ground up. Once established, the national interagency IMT should train, exercise and respond together to improve unity of effort and continuously enhance the nation's response capabilities.⁴⁵

A Unified National Information Management System: A national, unified information management system should be developed to align multi-agency reporting requirements and create a single common operational picture. While DOD promotes the concepts of network-centric warfare for expeditionary forces, the homeland security team operates with multiple disparate information networks.⁴⁶ The bottom line is that each State, the National Guard, DOD, and DHS, plus multiple other domestic response agencies, all use different information management systems. As a result, information cannot be effectively shared during time-critical response operations and scarce resources are expended to accomplish redundant reporting requirements. As discussed earlier, this lack of situational awareness is magnified by the fact that the DOD and other federal agencies are separated physically and culturally. Ultimately, lost time, lost information and crossed signals during domestic response operations cost lives and further threaten the nation's safety.

In an attempt to improve interagency communications, DHS created the Homeland Security Information Network. However, according to the DHS Inspector General, the system was "put together too quickly" to ensure it meets information protection standards,

specifically for sensitive and classified intelligence and law enforcement information.⁴⁷ As a result, DOD, FBI, and others are reluctant to use the system. Operational security (OPSEC) is not only a significant issue for DOD. The law enforcement community and many other federal agencies must also maintain OPSEC for mission success. This issue, however, should not be used as a roadblock to integration and unity of effort. Exercises, such as DETERMINED PROMISE in 2004, have demonstrated that classified planning cells can function effectively inside a multi-agency command and control organization. Additionally, placing OPSEC as a barrier to integration may cost additional lives when DOD and multiple agencies must quickly unite in response to WMD attacks or a pandemic outbreak.

In addition to the lessons learned from 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, and numerous other domestic responses and exercises, DOD is building lessons daily during the ongoing operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. General John Abizaid, former Commander of U.S. Central Command, stated before a Congressional Committee that “a common information network that is accessible and available to all our Coalition and agency partners is critical to battlefield success.”⁴⁸ It stands to reason that a common information management network is also critical to the domestic operational environment. According to the National Military Strategy, DOD is responsible for developing a fully interoperable, interagency-wide global information grid (GIG) to enable effective information management flow.⁴⁹ While NIMS requires the DHS to facilitate the development and implementation of a system to provide a national common operating picture, DOD possesses tools and expertise to enhance this effort, as well as the lion’s share of funding. As stated in the *Strategy for Homeland Defense and Civil Support*, “there is only one game” and “DOD must change its conceptual approach” to fully support domestic security and response operations. The benefits of unifying

information management systems and aligning joint agency “battle rhythms” outweigh the costs. Synchronized planning, actions and reporting will improve response efficiency and effectiveness and, in turn, greatly enhance joint information operations.

Joint Doctrine Revisions: Joint Doctrine should be revised to incorporate NIMS organizational structures, the ICS planning process and DOD JFO integration guidance. Absent joint doctrine, integration of JTF staff members into the JFO is often dependent upon “personalities and politics.”⁵⁰ To reduce risk and improve integration and interoperability, operational-level integration in the domestic realm must be incorporated into Joint Doctrine. For example, the 2006 edition of *Joint Publication 5.0: Joint Operation Planning* does not address NIMS or its associated planning process.⁵¹ Of greatest significance, joint doctrine’s “model for coordination between military and non-military organizations,” shown in Figure 3, did not change significantly between the 1996 and 2006 editions despite advances in domestic interagency coordination and the nationwide adoption of NIMS and the NRP.⁵² Military strategist Milan Vego notes “interoperability is achieved by developing and applying joint doctrine...”⁵³ By legislative direction, the concept of “joint” now includes all U.S. agencies in addition to the DOD services. Hopefully, this will serve as an impetus to move forward with more integrated and inclusive joint doctrine.⁵⁴

Conclusion

The Global War on Terrorism is being fought on two fronts. While the media and fiscal focus is on the overseas efforts, the home front receives comparatively little attention.⁵⁵ Incremental improvements are made in the wake of periodic catastrophes. In March 2007, the outgoing NORTHCOM Commander, Admiral Keating, stated that the military is still not prepared for concurrent domestic WMD attacks.⁵⁶ DOD and domestic response agencies

have yet to implement a truly unified command structure at the operational level with the necessary unified communications and information management systems to effectively respond to a national terrorism event that overwhelms local and State responders.⁵⁷ Today, however, DOD joint doctrine hollowly suggests that “seamless integration and synchronization” and “full spectrum dominance” across the range of military operations can be achieved.⁵⁸

In sum, it is time for DOD leaders to start practicing what they preach. By integrating DOD command and control elements into a single USG unified command at the operational level, training and deploying military officers who support CS and HS missions commensurate with their civilian counterparts, creating a unified information management system, and incorporating this transformation into joint doctrine, seamless integration and synchronization will no longer be hollow words and General Renault can truly mend a seam that strengthens our shield.

FIGURE 1

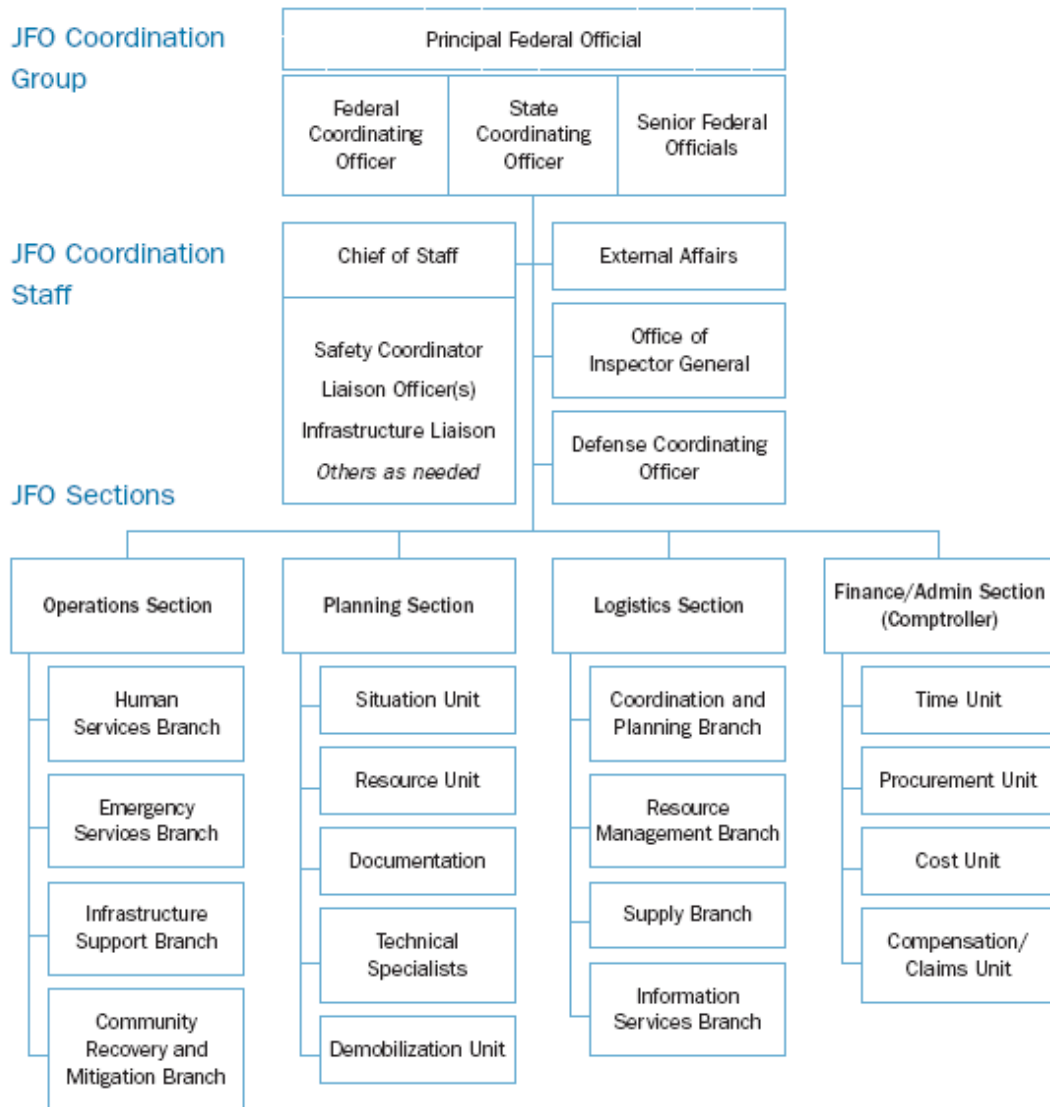


Figure 1: Sample Joint Field Office Organization Chart

Source: Department of Homeland Security, National Response Plan, (Washington, DC: December 2004).

FIGURE 2

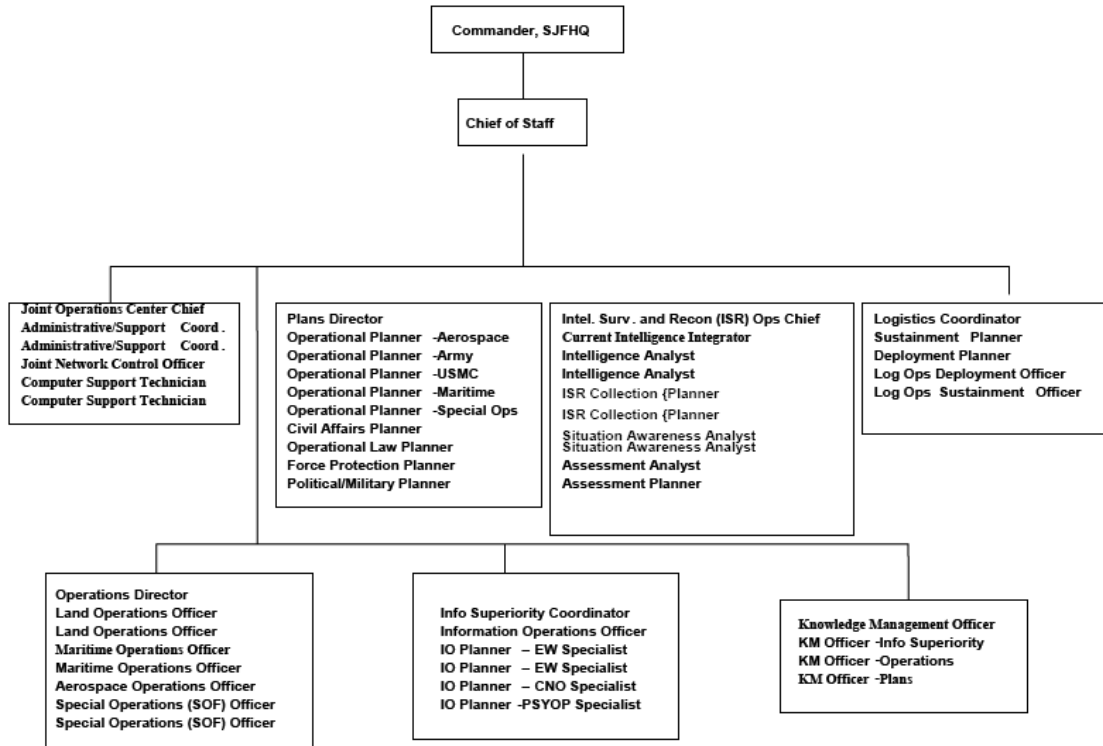


Figure 2: A Notional Standing Joint Force Headquarters (SJFHQ) Organization Chart

Source: National Defense University Joint Forces Staff College

FIGURE 3

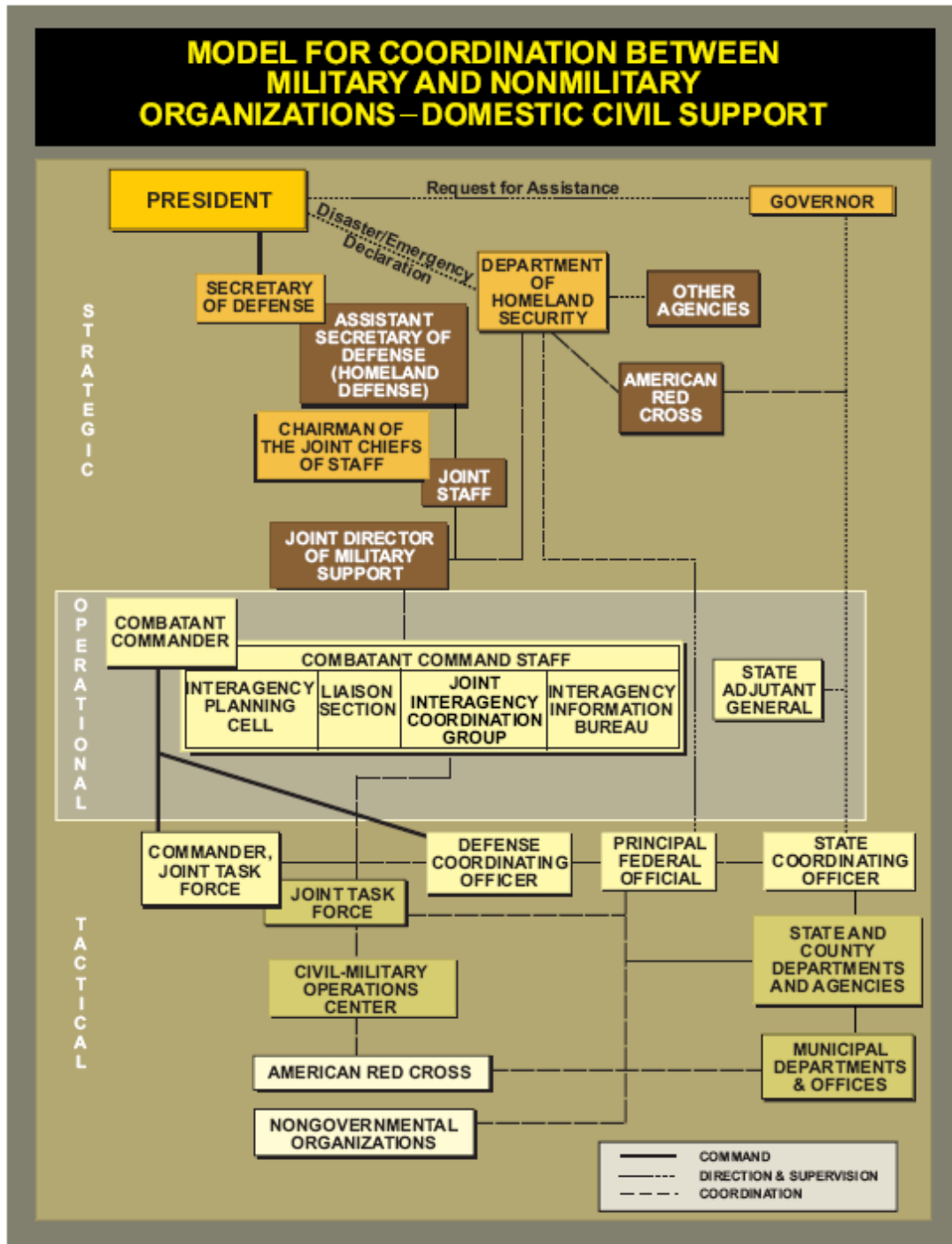


Figure 3: Model for Coordination between Military and Nonmilitary Organizations – Domestic Civil Support

Source: U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. Joint Publication 3-08: Interagency, Intergovernmental Organization, and Nongovernmental Organization Coordination During Joint Operations – Volume 1, (Washington, DC: 17 March 2006).

NOTES

¹ The White House, The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned, (Washington, DC: February 2006), 1. The reports states "...Hurricane Katrina was a deadly reminder that we can and must do better" and "the 600-page National Response Plan...came up short." Department of Homeland Security, "TOPOFF 3," April 25, 2006, <http://www.dhs.gov/xprepresp/training/editorial_0588.shtm> [15 March 2007]. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Top Officials Three Exercise (TOPOFF 3) was a Congressionally mandated exercise designed to strengthen the nation's capacity to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from large-scale terrorist attacks involving weapons of mass destruction. The Full-Scale Exercise took place April 4–8, 2005. Information management and command and control issues were noted as significant areas for improvement.

² Milan N Vego, Operational Warfare, (Newport, RI: U.S. Naval War College Press, 2000), 187-193. Vego states "A divided command invariably has been a source of great weakness, often yielding fatal consequences" and "The essential elements of any command organization are span of control, command echelons, information flow, communications, integration, and coordination."

³ Ivan T. Luke, "Homeland Security – Civil Support: How DOD Plugs into the Interagency C2 Structure," (Newport, RI: U.S. Naval War College Press, October 2005). Luke states, in regards to the relationship between Homeland Security and Homeland Defense, "This ambiguity raises the possibility of a 'seam' in our defense."

⁴ U.S. Department of Homeland Security, National Response Plan, (Washington, DC: December 2004), ix. The NRP replaced the Federal Response Plan (FRP), U.S. Government Domestic Terrorism Concept of Operations Plan (CONPLAN), and Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan (FRERP).

⁵ U.S. Department of Homeland Security, National Incident Management System, (Washington, DC: March 2004), 1-6. This document states that the National Incident Management System "will provide a consistent nationwide approach for Federal, State, local, and tribal governments to work effectively together to prepare for, prevent, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size or complexity." The report also states that "...NIMS requires that field command and management functions be performed in accordance with a standard set of ICS organizations, doctrine and procedures," and that "ICS establishes common terminology, standards, and procedures that enable diverse organizations to work together effectively."

⁶ National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, (New York, NY: W.W. Norton, July 2004), 396-397. The 9/11 Commission recommended that "emergency response agencies nationwide should adopt the Incident Command System. When multiple agencies or multiple jurisdictions are involved, they should adopt a unified command. Both are proven frameworks for emergency response."

⁷ George W. Bush, Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD-5), (Washington, DC: 28 February 2003). The purpose of this directive was to "enhance the ability of the United States to manage domestic incidents by establishing a single, comprehensive national incident management system." George W. Bush, Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD-8), (Washington, DC: 17 December 2003). HSPD-8 is a companion directive to HSPD-5 to improve coordination during national response operations. "This directive describes the way Federal departments and agencies will prepare for such a response, including prevention activities during the early stages of a terrorism incident."

⁸ Federal Emergency Management Agency, NIMS and the Incident Command System, 23 November 2004. <http://www.fema.gov/txt/emergency/nims/nims_ics_position_paper.txt> [23 March 2007].

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ U.S. Coast Guard, Incident Management Handbook, U.S. Coast Guard COMDTPUB P3120.17A, (Washington, DC: 18 August 2006). The U.S. Coast Guard's marine safety community adopted ICS in 1996 for

use during responses to oil and hazardous material response operations. In 1998, ICS was adopted throughout the agency. The Incident Command System Instruction (COMDTINST 3120.14, dated August 24, 1998), signed by Rear Admiral Riutta, Chief of Operations, and Rear Admiral North, Chief of Marine Safety, required all Coast Guard personnel involved in response actions to be trained in the Incident Command System and established of an “all-hazards” use of ICS. The instruction noted: “The failure to adopt a standard response system within the Coast Guard can create inefficiencies for all parties involved in response operations...The lack of a standard response management system prevents the development of a highly effective training curriculum. A structured training curriculum would result in qualified personnel who can immediately support units engaged in contingency response nationally, regionally, and locally....”

¹¹ Gordon England, Implementation of the National Response Plan and the National Incident Management System, Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum OSD 21913-05, (Washington, DC: 29 November 2005).

¹² Tim Deal, Michael de Bettencourt, Vickie Huyck, Gary Merrick and Chuck Mills, Beyond Initial Response: Using the National Incident Management System’s Incident Command System, (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse 2006), 1-1 – 1-5.

¹³ U.S. Department of Homeland Security, National Incident Management System, (Washington, DC: March 2004), 15.

¹⁴ Ivan T. Luke, “Homeland Security – Civil Support: How DOD Plugs into the Interagency C2 Structure,” (Newport, RI: U.S. Naval War College Press, October 2005), 9.

¹⁵ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. Joint Publication 3-26: Homeland Security, (Washington, DC: 2 August 2005), IV-4. The defense coordinating officer (DCO) serves as the single DOD point of contact within the disaster area. The DCO will be OPCON to the designated supported Combatant Commander or Joint Task Force Commander.

¹⁶ Michael Chesney, Colonel, Region V Defense Coordinating Officer. Interview by author, 30 March 2007.

¹⁷ Greg H. Parlier, U.S. Army, The Goldwater Nichols Act of 1986: Resurgence in Defense Reform and the Legacy of Eisenhower, (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps Combat Development Center, 15 May 1989).

¹⁸ U.S. Department of Homeland Security, National Response Plan, (Washington, DC: December 2004), 20.

¹⁹ U.S. Coast Guard Activities New York, Operation Vigilant Guard Information Management Plan, (New York, NY: 28 August 2005). The FBI’s Joint Field Office, U.S. Secret Service’s Command Post, the Intelligence Fusion Center, Field Intelligence Support Team, Tactical Operations Center, Principal Federal Official’s Office, Multi-Agency Coordination Center, Coast Guard Unified Command, Joint Field Office, U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM), and Joint Information Center were separated by geography and disparate communications and information management systems.

²⁰ Chris Doane, Chief of Response Operations, U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area. Interview by author, 25 March 2007. Mr. Doane stated that the JTF operated “in a vacuum” and “outside the inter-agency decision-making cycle.”

²¹ U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Homeland Security Information Network to Expand Collaboration, Connectivity for States and Major Cities, Press Release, (Washington, DC: 24 February 2004).

²² The White House, The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned, (Washington, DC: February 2006), 42-43.

²³ Bryan Seale, Standing Joint Force Headquarters – North, U.S. Northern Command. Interview by author, 27 March 2007. Mr. Seale deployed as a member of SJFHQ-N following the landfall of Hurricane Katrina and served as a liaison between the JFO and JTK-Katrina.

²⁴ U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Notice of Change to the National Response Plan, (Washington, DC: 25 May 2006), 6.

²⁵ Seale, Interview.

²⁶ U.S. Senate, John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007, 109th Congress, 2nd Session, (Washington, DC: 2006), 255-256. The John Warner National Defense Authorization Act (FY07) redefined “joint matters” as matters related to (a) national military strategy, (b) strategic planning and contingency planning, (c) command and control of operations under a unified command, (d) national security planning with other departments and agencies of the United States; and (e) combined operations with military forces of allied nations. Of significance, the legislation expanded the term “joint” to include “other departments and agencies of the United States” and “non-governmental persons or entities.”

²⁷ U.S. Department of Defense, Strategy for Homeland Defense and Civil Support, (Washington, DC: June 2005), 4 and 40. The report states: “The Strategy for Homeland Defense and Civil Support...will require the Department to integrate strategy, planning, and operational capabilities for homeland defense and civil support more fully into DOD processes.”

²⁸ U.S. Northern Command, USNORTHCOM CONPLAN 2501-05: Defense Support of Civil Authorities, (Peterson Air Force Base, CO: 11 April 2006). U.S. Department of Defense National Military Strategy of the United States of America, (Washington, DC: 2004).

²⁹ Stephen Flynn, America The Vulnerable: How Our Government is Failing to Protect Us from Terrorism, (New York, NY: HarperCollins 2004), 142. Flynn notes that “one particularly gray area that DHS must sort out is how to interact with the Department of Defense. The Pentagon has been keen to maintain its autonomy by assigning to itself the mission of “homeland defense,” which it defines as involving terrorist attacks that emanate from outside the United States. Relying on this definition, defense planners have essentially found a way to carve out a niche where the armed forces patrol air space and the high seas, and prepare to respond to catastrophic attacks when they happen. While there are some liaison officers assigned to one another’s staffs, by and large, the Pentagon, through its Office of Homeland Defense and Northern Command, is marshalling its considerable expertise and resources to do its own thing.”

³⁰ Jeffrey D. Gafkjen, U.S. Northern Command (J7), Interviews by author on 25 August and 29 September 2006.

³¹ T. J. McKearney, Collaborative Planning for Military Operations: Emerging Technologies and Changing Command Organizations, (San Diego, CA: Kapos Associates, 2000), 3. McKearney states: “The model for crisis planning, as reflected in doctrine and the Joint Operational Planning and Execution System (JOPES), is based on a formal six step process which structures the development of an Operations Order (OPORD) from the initial indications of a crisis. While useful as a framework for plan development, this canonical model is generally acknowledged as rarely followed in practice. Instead, the rapid pace at which contemporary crises develop calls for parallel rather than sequential, step-wise planning of a military response.”

³² Department of Defense, Military Assistance to Civil Authorities, Department of Defense Directive 3025.15, (Washington, DC: 18 February 1997).

³³ Department of Homeland Security, Notice of Change to the National Response Plan, (Washington, DC: May 25, 2006), 9. The 2006 revision to the National Response Plan states: “The Catastrophic Incident Annex is primarily designed to address no-notice incidents of catastrophic magnitude, where the need for Federal assistance is obvious and immediate, where anticipatory planning and resource pre-positioning were precluded, and where the exact nature of needed resources and assets is not known.” Catastrophic events are defined as “chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or high-yield explosive weapons of mass destruction, or large magnitude earthquakes or other natural or technological disasters in or near heavily populated areas.”

³⁴ U.S. Department of Homeland Security, National Response Plan, (Washington, DC: December 2004), 10. “Nothing in this plan impairs or otherwise affects the authority of the Secretary of Defense over the DOD, including the chain of command for military forces from the President as Commander in Chief, to the Secretary of Defense, to the commander of military forces, or military command and control procedures.”

³⁵ National Governor’s Association Center for Best Practices, A Governor’s Guide to Homeland Security, (Washington, DC: 2007), 37. The President must inform Congress that he is going to exercise this new authority and must continue to inform Congress every 14 days thereafter as long as he exercises that authority.

³⁶ The White House, The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, (Washington, DC: March 2006), 45 and 48.

³⁷ Gary Luck, Insights on Joint Operations: The Art and Science – Best Practices; The Move Toward Coherently Integrated Joint, Interagency, and Multinational Operations, (Norfolk, VA: Joint Warfighting Center, September 2006), 3.

³⁸ Jeffrey D. Gafkjen, U.S. Northern Command (J7), E-mail to author on 28 September 2006. DOD is working with DHS to designate two National Level Exercises (NLE) per year: ARDENT SENTRY, a DOD-led exercise, and TOPOFF, a DHS-led exercise.

³⁹ The White House, The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned, (Washington, DC: February 2006), 70.

⁴⁰ U.S. Forest Service, Interagency Incident Management Teams, 31 January 2007.
<http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/fire/management/team_info/index.php> [22 February 2007].

⁴¹ U.S. Joint Forces Command. Fact Sheet: Standing Joint Force Headquarters Core Element (SJFHQ-CE). (Norfolk, VA: September 2005).

⁴² Douglas K. Zimmerman, “Understanding the Standing Joint Force Headquarters,” Military Review, (July-August 2004): 28-32.

⁴³ David Giordano, Frank Shelley, Rudyard Quiachon and William Whitson. “NIMS/ICS Training: Ensuring our readiness to effectively respond to domestic incidents.” Proceedings of the Marine Safety and Security Council, Volume 63, Number 4 (Winter 2006-2007): 18-22. Type 1 Certification is the highest certification. Type 1 incidents are “the most complex, requiring national resources to safely and effectively manage and operate.” “Operations personnel often exceed 500 per operational period and total personnel will usually exceed 1,000.”

⁴⁴ U.S. Coast Guard Response Directorate Issue Paper, April 26, 2007. The Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA) of 2006 includes two references requiring FEMA to establish response teams. Section 507 requires each FEMA Regional Administrator, in coordination with other relevant Federal Agencies, to oversee multi-agency strike teams. FEMA has determined that a multi-agency strike team is the same as an IMT. Section 633 requires FEMA to establish a minimum of three national response teams.

⁴⁵ Clark A. Murdock and Michèle A. Flourney, Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: U.S. Government and Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era, (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), July 2005), 6. The CSIS report states: “Interagency operations are no longer rare. Yet crises are still managed largely on a case-by-case basis, with interagency coordination mechanisms invented with time. While such *ad hoc* processes are agile, they are neither coherent nor durable. Since there is no reason to believe that today’s crisis will be the last, it makes sense to plan for the next one.”

⁴⁶ The White House, National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, (Washington, DC: September 2006), 40. The report states “The Department of Defense must change its conceptual approach to homeland defense. The Department can no longer think in terms of the “home” game and the “away” game. There is only one game.”

⁴⁷ Lara J. Jordon, “Homeland Security Information Network Criticized,” The Washington Post, (Washington, DC: 10 May 2005): A06.

⁴⁸ John P. Abizaid, “Statement,” U.S. Congress, House Committee on Armed Services, Hearings before the House Committee on Armed Services, (Washington, DC: 15 March 2006), 27.

⁴⁹ U.S. Department of Defense, National Military Strategy of the United States of America, (Washington, DC: 2004), 22.

⁵⁰ Seale, Interview.

⁵¹ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 5-0: Joint Operation Planning, (Washington, DC: 26 December 2006).

⁵² U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-08: Interagency, Intergovernmental Organization, and Nongovernmental Organization Coordination During Joint Operations – Volume 1, (Washington, DC: 9 October 1996 and 17 March 2006).

⁵³ Milan N. Vego, Operational Warfare, (Newport, RI: U.S. Naval War College Press 2000), 190.

⁵⁴ Paul Lattanzi, “Managing International Preparedness: The adoption of ICS principles,” Proceedings of the Marine Safety and Security Council, (Winter 2006-2007): 72-74. The need to incorporate NIMS and ICS concepts into joint doctrine is not only being driven domestically. Many other nations have adopted ICS as their response system. For example, the Panama Canal Authority has adopted ICS for response operations. Given the number of U.S. Navy and Coast Guard vessels that transit this vital chokepoint, not to mention the volume of commercial shipping critical to national security, it can be envisioned that DOD personnel will work with an ICS command and control structure outside the United States in the future.

⁵⁵ Gary Hart and Warren B. Rudman, America – Still Unprepared, Still in Danger, Council on Foreign Relations, (Washington, DC: October 2002), vii. The report states “America remains dangerously unprepared to prevent and respond to a catastrophic terrorist attack on U.S. soil.”

⁵⁶ InsideDefense.com, “Keating: Military Not Fully Prepared for Concurrent Domestic Attacks,” 26 March 2007. <<http://insidedefense.com/secure/insider>> [28 March 2007].

⁵⁷ U.S. Department of Defense, Strategy for Homeland Defense and Civil Support, (Washington, DC: June 2005), 19. The report states: “The potential for multiple, simultaneous, CBRNE attacks on US territory is real. It is therefore imperative that the Department of Defense be prepared to support civilian responders in responding to such mass casualty events.”

⁵⁸ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-26: Homeland Security, (Washington, DC: 2 August 2005), I-9.

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<http://www.fema.gov/txt/emergency/nims/nims_ics_position_paper.txt> [23 March 2007].

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